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1 1. (Amended) A method for improving receive performance in a data network,
2 the method comprising:
3 receiving up to a plurality of indications denoting the start of frame transmission on a
4 corresponding plurality of communication links;
5 identifying that [the] at least one [or more] of the received indications denote the start
6 of a flow; and
7 dedicating a receive buffer from a plurality of receive buffers to receive all frames
8 associated with the identified flow.

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1 2. (Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein identifying the start of flow
2 [involves] includes analyzing information embedded within each of the received frames to
3 determine source and destination information associated with said frames.

1 3. (Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising [the step of]
2 determining whether the identified flow requires preservation of transmission order.

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1 9. (Amended) An apparatus comprising:
2 a plurality of buffers, each [having] buffer including a plurality of records; and
3 a network interface[,] coupled to the [buffer] plurality of buffers, the network
4 interface to receive a plurality of frames, [from a plurality of communication links of a data
5 network,] to identify whether the received frames indicate a flow condition and to dedicate a
6 buffer from the plurality of buffers to accommodate all frames received associated with the
7 identified flow condition.

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1 13. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the network interface assigns
2 a pointer value to each frame of the identified flow corresponding to commencement of

3 transmission of the frame to create a list of pointer values associated with each frame
4 corresponding to transmission order if it is determined that preservation of frame
5 transmission order is required[.].

1 14. (Amended) The apparatus of claim [19] 2, wherein the plurality of frames are
2 received from a plurality of communication links that are part of an Ethernet network.

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1 15. (Amended) A data network comprising:
2 a first network device; and
3 a second network device communicatively coupled with the first [one or more]
4 network [devices] device, the second network device including:
5 one or more buffers, each buffer having a plurality of records; and
6 a network interface[,] coupled to the buffers, the network interface to receive a
7 plurality of frames from at least a [plurality of] communication [links of] link
8 associated with the data network, to identify whether the received frames indicate
9 existence of a flow condition, and to dedicate a buffer from the plurality of buffers to
10 accommodate all frames received associated with the identified flow condition.

1 16. (Amended) The data network of claim 15, wherein the network interface of
2 the second network device promotes frames from the dedicated buffer in the order received,
3 unless it is determined that preservation of frame transmission order is required.

1 17. (Amended) The data network of claim 16, wherein the network interface of
2 the second network device determines whether preservation of frame transmission order is
3 required by analyzing protocol related information embedded within the frames.

1 18. (Amended) The data network of claim 16, wherein the network interface of
2 the second network device assigns a pointer value to each received frame of a flow condition
3 denoting relative order of commencement of transmission, and promotes each frame in order
4 of the pointer value rather than the order in which the frames are received, when preservation
5 of frame transmission order is required.

1 19. (Amended) The data network of claim 15, wherein the network interface of
2 the second network device identifies the flow condition by analyzing source and destination
3 information embedded within the received frames.

Please add new claims 21-24 as follows:

1 Sub 21. (New) A medium having embodied thereon a program for processing by a
2 network device, the program comprising:
3 a module to receive an indication to denote commencement of a flow of frame
4 transmissions; and
5 a module to indicate at least one receive buffer to receive all frames associated with
6 the flow.

1 22. (New) The medium of claim 21, wherein the program further comprises a
2 module to promote frames of the received flow in the order received, unless it is determined
3 flow requires preservation of frame order.

1 Sub 23. (New) The medium of claim 21, wherein the program further comprises a
2 module to assign a pointer value to each frame of the identified flow corresponding to
3 commencement of transmission, creating a list of pointer values corresponding to

4 transmission order if it is determined that the identified flow requires preservation of
5 transmission order.

1 24. (New) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the network interface includes
2 a multiplexer coupled to the plurality of buffers;
3 a physical link coupled to each communication link of the plurality of communication
4 links; and
5 a medium access controller coupled between a corresponding physical link and the
6 multiplexer.
